

52- The Crucifixion of the Servant

Mark 15:21-32

**Mark 15:21-32** *And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross. 22 And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull. 23 And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not. 24 And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take. 25 And it was the third hour, and they crucified him. 26 And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS. 27 And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. 28 And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors. 29 And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, 30 Save thyself, and come down from the cross. 31 Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save. 32 Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him.*

The trial is over; most of the ridicule is behind Him, now the cross lies before Him. His purpose in coming is fast approaching. He will be dying for the sins of mankind, the innocent for the guilty that the guilty can go free. The crowd will get their wish, He will be crucified. The Jewish leaders will get their wish for Him to die but their world will never be the same. Our point in the Bible is I submit the single most important event in the history of mankind. He could have been born and refused the cross, without the death on the cross there can be no resurrection.

**I- Bearing the Cross:**

Jesus had been beaten to within an inch of His life, in fact many died from these beatings and blood loss. The Roman soldier led the condemned prisoners through the streets while the charges against them were read aloud. The prisoners were also forced to carry their own cross. Jesus was weak and we see that a man who has been immortalized was compelled to carry it. **Mark 15:21** *And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.*

We are reminded by this that we told by Jesus in **Mark 8:34** *And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*

He told the rich young ruler in **Mark 10:21** *"...to take up the cross, and follow me."* Luke records for us that Jesus told us this was a daily thing we need to do. **Luke 9:23** *And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.*

**II- The Place of the Skull:**

We have several names that we call the place where Jesus was crucified. It depends on what language has influenced it. It is called Calvary, Golgotha and the place of the skull. **Mark 15:22** *And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.*

What a grim name for a place but at the same time most fitting. The place that reeked with death was the place the sweet odor of eternal life would be released.

Concerning the place Guzik says, *"Some people think it was called Golgotha because it was littered with the skulls of men previously executed. Some think it was called Golgotha because it was on a hill that looked like a skull, with the shadows of a skull's face in the hillside. Some think it was called Golgotha because the hill was barren, smooth and round like the top of a skull."*

**III- No Numbing of Pain:**

Crucifixion was an especially painful way to die. There were two occasions hours apart that drink was offered. Mark only recorded the first. **Mark 15:23** *And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not.*

**Mark 10:45** For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

The Pulpit Commentary says, "This was a kind of stupefying liquor, a strong narcotic, made of the sour wine of the country, mingled with bitter herbs, and mercifully administered to dull the sense of pain. This was offered before the actual crucifixion took place."

Why is this important? Jesus did not allow Himself to be numbed in the mind and for other to make the decisions for Him. He could have called at any time for the angels to come and rescue Him but did not with total clear mind. He also suffered every last drop in the cup of sorrow for us.

#### IV- Casting Lots:

The soldiers cast lots for the clothing. We have as very bare bones account here in Mark. **Mark 15:24** *And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take.*

This had been prophesied in **Psalms 22:18** *They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.*

The soldiers would each take a portion of the clothing of the victim. However, there was one piece of Jesus clothing that they could not divide without rendering it useless so they cast lots for it. Notice John's account in **John 19:23-24** *Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. 24 They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.*

#### V- The Superscription:

Pilate you will recall asked Jesus if He was King of the Jews. When they crucified Jesus at about 9:00 AM by our way of telling time Pilate put a note on the cross that was normally reserved for the charges that had led to the person being crucified. Notice what Pilate placed over Jesus. **Mark 15:25-26** *And it was the third hour, and they crucified him. 26 And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS.*

This caused the High Priest and his cohorts to go asks Pilate to take it down. **John 19:21-22** *Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews. 22 Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.*

#### VI- Between Two Thieves:

The fulfillment of prophecy keep coming at us swiftly during this time of crucifixion. **Mark 15:27** *And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. 28 And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.*

This fulfillment was in reference to **Isaiah 53:12** *Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.*

#### VII- He Cannot Save Himself:

So again we come face to face with the question, could He have saved Himself. Listen to the tongue wranglers as the crowd passed by the cross. **Mark 15:29** *And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, 30 Save thyself, and come down from the cross. 31 Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save. 32 Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him.*

Could He have evaded the cross? Notice what He told Peter when he had just cut off the ear of the servant when they come to arrest Jesus. **Matthew 26:53** *Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?*

But He did not call, He endured the cross. He suffered the crucifixion for us, from which according to Guzik, "We get our English word excruciating from the Roman word "out of the cross." "

**Hebrews 12:2** *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*